



# IOWA RECOVERY TIMES

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Iowa Homeland Security  
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Management Division

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**Safer, Stronger,  
Smarter**

[www.rio.iowa.gov](http://www.rio.iowa.gov)

## LITTLE SIOUX SCOUT RANCH GRAND REOPENING

**O**n Saturday, May 2, Rebuild Iowa Office Executive Director Lt. General Ron Dardis traveled to western Iowa for the Grand Reopening of the Little Sioux Scout Ranch in Monona County.

Lt. General Dardis spoke at the welcome ceremony, commending the scouts for the bravery and leadership they showed in the wake of last year's devastating tornado and recognizing the work of the first responders who aided those campers. Lt. General Dardis also applauded the leaders of the Scout Ranch



*RIO Executive Director Lt. General Ron Dardis speaks to those present at the Little Sioux Scout Ranch Reopening on May 2.*

for their hard work and dedication in rebuilding the ranch.

Last June, the Scout Ranch was devastated by an EF3

tornado which killed four scouts and injured many more. May 2 marked the official reopening of the camp to the public.

## IOWA COMMUNITIES HOST ONE-YEAR DISASTER COMMEMORATION EVENTS

The Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO) has been working with Iowa's disaster-affected communities to promote each community's planned events for the One-Year Commemoration of last summer's devastating storms, tornadoes and flooding.

Representatives from the RIO and its local, state and

federal recovery partners will also be present in many of the communities hosting a "RIO Resource Booth" during many of the commemoration events to answer questions about Iowa's recovery and assistance programs available to Iowans impacted by last summer's disasters.

A list including dates of the planned community events can be found on page 4. For more information, including specific events and dates and times for the "RIO Resource Booth," visit the Rebuild Iowa Office Web site at [www.rio.iowa.gov](http://www.rio.iowa.gov) and select the "One Year Commemoration Events" button on the left margin.

## THIS YEAR'S DISASTER LEGISLATION DRIVEN BY PUBLIC INPUT

Public input sessions and task force meetings were the driving force behind legislation to address last summer's devastating storms, flooding and tornadoes. From the public's response, the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission (RIAC) crafted their 120-Day report to the Governor.

Lt. General Ron Dardis and members of the Commission presented 12 recommendations for Iowa's recovery from the 2008 disasters in the November report to the Governor and legislators. The report included a vision for Iowa's long-term recovery and rebuilding process, as well as steps the state and local communities should take to achieve that vision.

The Commission's 12 recommendations for Iowa's long-term recovery included:

- Provide individual services and guidance
- Make housing a priority
- Provide incentives for Iowa's struggling small businesses, micro-enterprises, and non-profits
- Invest in infrastructure
- Create sustainable funding options for local and state rebuilding efforts
- Invest in local emergency management agencies for the central coordination function and work in all areas of emergency management
- Enact policies to make communities sustainable and protect Iowa's quality of life and cultural heritage
- Lead and support integrated, regional recovery planning
- Enact policy to address floodplain and watershed management
- Complete floodplain mapping for the entire state
- Formalize the Rebuild Iowa Office and recovery responsibilities
- Lead communications efforts to educate Iowans on recovery

efforts and planning for future potential disasters

The Rebuild Iowa Office has put together a document showing legislation which was passed during the 2009 session to address each of these areas. All legislation remains pending until signed into law by the Governor. The document is available on the Rebuild Iowa Office's Web site at <http://www.rio.iowa.gov/resources/legislation.html>.

The Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission was established by the Governor's Executive Order Seven on June 27 following the storms, tornadoes and flooding of 2008.

The RIAC is a 15-person, bipartisan commission whose members chaired nine task forces comprised of Iowans who volunteered their time to address disaster recovery needs. Each task force focused on specific issues that developed further recommendations to support the state's strategic recovery and rebuilding process.

## INTERIM MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EXTENDED FOR DISASTER-AFFECTED IOWANS

The Iowa Finance Authority's (IFA) Board of Directors has agreed to extend interim mortgage assistance to disaster-impacted Iowans. This applies to homeowners who are currently receiving the assistance through the Jumpstart Iowa Housing Assistance Program.

Interim mortgage assistance was first made available to Iowans impacted by the 2008 floods and storms in September, when the Jumpstart Iowa Housing Assistance Program was first made public. Under the assistance program, Iowans whose principal residence was on the list of properties

being considered for a "buy-out" could receive up to \$1,000 a month in mortgage assistance for up to 12 months (depending on whether the applicant received state or federal assistance).

IFA's board amended the Jumpstart Housing Program rules, allowing homeowners to receive up to an additional six months of interim mortgage assistance for applicants already receiving it.

The Interim Mortgage Assistance program was developed to take away the burden of two mortgages, leaving

the impacted homeowner with responsibility for only the mortgage of the new home. The assistance may be used for payment of principal, interest, property taxes and hazard insurance.

Homeowners currently receiving Interim Mortgage Assistance should contact the local Council of Government or Entitlement City in which they applied for the Jumpstart Housing Program.

For additional information, contact the Rebuild Iowa Office at (515) 242-5004.

## NEW MITIGATION PROJECT IN MUSCATINE TO MINIMIZE EFFECTS OF FUTURE DISASTERS

Since 1993, the City of Muscatine had to spend thousands of dollars to repair a playground which has been damaged by flood waters four times – including in the floods of June 2008. Thanks to a new mitigation project, however, the city will have its playground and save thousands of dollars in the future.

Last June, when the playground was inundated with floodwaters and contaminated with sewage water and silt, an application was made to FEMA through the Public Assistance Program to assist in the cost of repairing the damaged site.

In most cases, Public Assistance repair and restoration funding brings the damaged infrastructure back to pre-disaster conditions. However, a major policy goal for FEMA and the state of Iowa is to mitigate, where it is cost effective, when restoring damaged infrastructure so the repaired facility is better able to withstand future disaster damages. A little extra money spent now may save additional

repair funds later.

The playground was previously damaged in the floods of 1993, 1997 and 2001. Each time, pea gravel was used to make repairs. After the 2008 flood, however, the contaminated pea gravel was removed and replaced with a concrete slab – the majority of which was then coated with a rubberized safety surface.

The new surface can now be hosed off should there be another flood, making restoration more timely and cost effective.

The total cost of the project was \$51,672 with FEMA covering 90 percent of the cost and the state paying the remainder. The potential cost savings of this mitigation project is \$51,000 per flood event.

The Public Assistance Program reimburses eligible government jurisdictions and certain non profits for costs for debris removal, emergency protective measures and the repair or restoration of damaged public infrastructure.

## REBUILD IOWA COORDINATING COUNCIL HOLDS FIRST MEETING

The Rebuild Iowa Coordinating Council held its first meeting on May 19 to discuss the role it will play in the 2008 disaster recovery efforts.

The Coordinating Council was created in HF 64, the same legislation that formalized the Rebuild Iowa Office. The Council was created to facilitate communication between state agencies, local governments and the Rebuild Iowa Office. The Coordinating Council consists of representatives from 17 state agencies, the Iowa League of Cities, the Iowa State Association of Counties, Council of Governments and four Iowa legislators.

“Although this is a disaster of incredible magnitude, it is also an opportunity for us to build safer, stronger and smarter,” said

Rebuild Iowa Office Executive Director and Coordinating Council Chair, Lt. General Ron Dardis. “This Council will be a very important vehicle to move the disaster recovery process forward and accomplish the goals of synchronization and coordination, while improving and changing the recovery process along the way.”

The mission of the Coordinating Council is to encourage cooperation and partnership among government agencies regarding Iowa’s long-term disaster recovery plan from the 2008 storms and floods that impacted 85 of Iowa’s 99 counties.

(Continued on page 4)

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*-RIO Executive Director  
Lt. Gen. Ron Dardis*

## The Rebuild Iowa Office



*The Rebuild Iowa Office is tasked with ensuring that the state rebuilds safer, stronger and smarter than before the 2008 disasters. The RIO is supported by a professional staff made up of existing state employees and hired full-time staff to allow it to achieve its mission, vision, goals and objectives. Throughout its initiatives, the RIO is committed to a recovery and rebuilding process that is fair and equitable to everyone.*

[www.rio.iowa.gov](http://www.rio.iowa.gov)

## REBUILD IOWA OFFICE

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## COMMUNITY COMMEMORATION DATES

- Parkersburg - May 23-25
- New Hartford - May 25
- Palo - May 30
- Waterloo - May 28-31
- Mason City - June 07
- Cedar Rapids - June 11-13
- Oakville - June 12-14
- Iowa City's Idyllwild neighborhood - June 13
- Olin - June 14
- Waverly - June 13
- Iowa City / University of Iowa - June 15
- Cedar Falls - June 24

## COORDINATING COUNCIL (continued from page 3)

The Coordinating Council representatives each discussed their role in the disaster recovery process. Involvement ranged from areas of housing, economic recovery and flood plain management to education, cultural, energy and utility issues. Representatives were then asked to explain what concerns needed to be addressed to make the recovery effort more efficient and effective. Conversation included increased communications at the local, state and federal level, further clarification on disaster assistance programs, the inflexibility of federal funds, the need for a disaster track so federal dollar can move faster and the lack of sharing information and databases between agencies.

Steve Saunders, Director of FEMA Preparedness Directorate National Exercise Division, also presented to the Council. Saunders is working with the Rebuild Iowa Office on an Iowa Recovery

Analysis report which will look at best practices and areas for improvement in Iowa's disaster recovery. Once completed, the Iowa Recovery Analysis will then be presented at the federal level for possible changes in law, regulations and policies related to disaster recovery. Workshops, interviews and surveys will be used to gather feedback from constituents, legislators, program administrators and local, state and federal government officials for the report.

"Some policies and procedures need to be blended, redone or done away with, but it doesn't happen overnight," said Saunders. "It is my hope this data analysis will help shape federal laws at Congress to make them more effective."

The Rebuild Iowa Coordinating Council will meet every other month. Its next meeting will be in July.

## Clip &amp; Save...

## Federal Agencies

General FEMA Information	800.621.FEMA (3362)
TTY for hearing/speech impaired	800.462.7585
FEMA Fraud Detection	800.323.8603
National Flood Insurance Program	800.427.4661
TTY for hearing/speech impaired	800.427.5593
Social Security Administration	800.772.1213
U.S. Small Business Administration	800.659.2955
Internal Revenue Service	800.829.1040
TTY for hearing/speech impaired	800.829.4059
Tax-Related Disaster Relief	866.562.5227
Housing & Urban Development Hotline	800.669.9777
Department of Veterans Affairs	800.827.0648

## Iowa Contacts

For up-to-date disaster and recovery information visit the Rebuild Iowa Office Web site at [www.rio.iowa.gov](http://www.rio.iowa.gov).

If you have questions about consumer fraud, contact Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division  
888.777.4590 or 515.281.5926

To volunteer or make donations, contact:  
Iowa Concern Hotline 800.447.1985

Disaster Unemployment Information 800.JOB.IOWA

Iowa Mortgage Help 877.622.4866 or  
[www.IowaMortgageHelp.com](http://www.IowaMortgageHelp.com)

Project Recovery Iowa crisis counseling  
(call the Iowa Concerns Hotline) 866.849.0323

Iowa Other Needs Assistance 800.659.2955

Other Needs Assistance 866.434.4692